



NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA SUPREME COURT

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two Supreme Court Awards Go to Courts in Pima County

PHOENIX, The efforts of courts in Pima County were recognized during the 2001 Supreme Court Achievement Awards Ceremony. Pima County received the Supreme Court's Being Accountable Award, and Division II of the State Appellate Court, which sits in Pima County, won the Supreme Court's Award for Providing Access to Swift, Fair Justice.

The Court's Being Accountable Award is given to recipients who have demonstrated substantial or creative contributions in using taxpayer resources wisely to achieve desired results; establishing and meeting court standards; linking performance with budget; maintaining ongoing strategic planning; and, continuing to enhance judicial performance review.

In presenting the Being Accountable Award to the Tucson City Court's Mental Health Court, Arizona Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas Zlaket remarked, "By working closely with government and community agencies to ensure appropriate mental health treatment and dismissal of charges, Tucson City Court's Mental Health Court program has reduced the number of days for detention of defendants with identified mental illnesses from an average of 22 days in 1999 to five in 2000. It also decreased costs to the court for Rule 11 Evaluations and county jail detention by more than \$250,000."

The Court's Award for Providing Access to Swift, Fair Justice is given to recipients who have demonstrated substantial or creative contributions in helping citizens, victims, litigants and defendants obtain access to a fair and swift process for resolving civil or criminal disputes; ensuring that resources are adequate; and, ensuring that court procedures, policies and practices are consistent with providing access to swift, fair justice.

In presenting this award to the Appellate Settlement Program of the Court of Appeals, Division II, Chief Justice Zlaket praised the court for, "re-engineering case processing." The changes made through the Settlement Program have resulted in substantial time and monetary savings to all parties. The Chief Justice also noted that the emotional trauma alleviated by the new case processing system is invaluable to the citizens using the appellate court process.

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